

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 SAB-01

ACDA-05 ORM-01 DHA-02 /082 W
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O P 071407Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5682

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 10053

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, IS, LE

SUBJECT: REACTION TO ISRAELI RAIDS NEAR TYRE

REFS: (A) BEIRUT DAO 528 AUG 75; (B) BEIRUT 9973

1. CONFIRMING INFORMATION IN REF B, GOL FOREIGN MINISTRY
HAS INSTRUCTED ITS AMBASSADOR IN NEW YORK TO SEND A PRO-
TEST TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT ABOUT THE AUGUST 5 IS-
RAELI ATTACKS NEAR TYRE. THE GOL WILL ASK THAT THE PROTEST
BE CIRCULATED TO SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS BUT WILL NOT SEEK
ANY SPECIAL SESSION OF THE SC. THIS RELATIVELY LOW-KEY
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REACTION WHICH HAS BEEN STANDARD LEBANESE PRACTICE IN RECENT

CASES, INDICATES THAT THE GOL DOES NOT WISH TO MAKE A MAJOR ISSUE OF THIS RAID.

2. REF A (NOTAL) GIVES DETAILS OF THE RAID AS SEEN BY LEBANESE ARMY LIAISON OFFICE. REF A BEING REPEATED USUN FOR INFORMATION.

3. REACTION IN BEIRUT TO THIS INCIDENT IS MILD SO FAR. LEFTIST POLITICAL LEADER KAMEL JUMBLATT PREDICTABLY CRITICIZED THE GOVERNMENT FOR NOT TAKING STRONGER MILITARY ACTION IN RETALIATION. DEPUTY RAYMOND EDDE, LEADER OF THE NATIONAL BLOC, SEIZED THE OCCASION TO REITERATE A STANDARD DEMAND OF HIS THAT A LARGE UNITED NATIONS FORCE BE PLACED ON THE BORDER BETWEEN LEBANON AND ISRAEL. MSOLEM LEADER SAEB SALAAM CALLED FOR GREATER MILITARY COORDINATION WITH SYRIA AND OTHER ARAB STATES. BUT BEYOND THIS, THE VISIBLE PUBLIC REACTION OUTSIDE THE EDITORIAL PAGES WAS THE FUNERAL FOR THE FOUR OFFICERS KILLED IN THE SHELLING, WHICH WAS WIDELY COVERED IN THE PRESS (SEE REF A). THE GOVERNMENT IS STRESSING THE THEME THAT THE ARMY IS SACRIFICING JUST LIKE OTHERS IN THE FACE OF ISRAELI "AGGRESSION." TEMPORARILY, A MOOD OF SOLIDARITY BETWEEN THE ARMY AND THE FEDAYEEN PREVAILS, BUT NO ONE EXPECTS THIS TO BE A LASTING PHENOMENON. LUCKILY FOR LEBANON'S IMAGE OF CONFESSONAL BALANCE, THE FOUR OFFICERS TURNED OUT TO BE TWO MARONITES, A SUNNI, AND A DRUZE.

4. PRIME MINISTER KARAME, IN HIS CAPACITY AS MINISTER OF DEFENSE, MET AUGUST 6 WITH SENIOR ARMY OFFICERS ABOUT THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTH. WE KNOW OF NO OTHER OFFICAL ACTION APART FROM A PERHAPS COINCIDENTAL ANNOUNCEMENT BY MINISTER OF LABOR GHASSAN TUENI THAT A PROGRAM OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THE SOUTH WOULD SOON BE PUT INTO EFFECT, FINANCED BY A 35 MILLION LEBANESE POUND FUND RECEIVED FROM ARAB STATES LAST YEAR FOR THIS PURPOSE.

5. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE MININT TOLD EMBOFF AUGUST 7 THAT THE ISRAELI RAID HAS ESCALATED THE LONG-STANDING DEBATE INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT ON WHETHER THE ARMY SHOULD SEEK TO RESTRAIN THE FEDAYEEN FROM THEIR INCURSIONS INTO IS-
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RAEL. HE IMPLIED THAT MANY GOVERNMENT LEADERS VIEW THE ISRAELI RAID AS BASICALLY A RETALIATION FOR FEDAYEEN PROVOCATIONS, ALTHOUGH THIS IS OF COURSE PRECISELY THE ISSUE UNDER DEBATE. DIRECTOR GENERAL ADDED THAT HE SAW NO POSSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT ACTION BEING TAKEN AGAINST THE FEDAYEEN, BECAUSE OF THE POLITICAL STRAINS THIS WOULD CAUSE.

6. THE PALESTINIAN NEWS AGENCY Wafa ARRANGED A VISIT
AUGUST 6 BY LOCAL AND FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS TO THE AL
BORGHOLIAH REFUGEE CAMP NEAR TYRE, ONE OF THE ISRAELI
TARGETS. THIS MAY STIMULATE FURTHER PRESS AND PUBLIC RE-
ACTION. TENSION ALLEGEDLY REMAINS HIGH IN THE BORDER AREA
IN THE WAKE OF A MINOR ISRAELI CROSS-BORDER INCURSION
AUGUST 7 (SEE SEPTTEL COMING.
GODLEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COMBAT OPERATIONS, DIPLOMATIC PROTESTS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: RowellE0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BEIRUT10053
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750273-0024
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750871/aaaacksj.tel
Line Count: 123
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BEIRUT 9973
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: RowellE0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <03 OCT 2003 by RowellE0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REACTION TO ISRAELI RAIDS NEAR TYRE
TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, IS, LE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006